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Comprehensive Package of Sustainability Initiatives Launched

LYNDHURST, N.J. – Following the multi-agency Meadowlands Green Building Summit held at the beginning of the month, the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission's Board of Commissioners approved three initiatives today designed to support a sustainability agenda in the Meadowlands.

The Commissioners set in motion an effort to change District land use regulations to facilitate green building, began the process of analyzing the potential for increased green energy production in the District and established a new resource institute to help developers build and maintain properties in a more environmentally sound manner.

"Comprehensive redevelopment and conservation go hand in hand," said NJMC Chairman and Acting New Jersey Department of Community Affairs Commissioner Charles Richman. "We must lay the groundwork for a more sustainable region that can serve as a model for using the best tools to ensure our environmental security."

First the NJMC will move to publish and hold a public hearing on proposed regulations that would allow an expedited permit process and a 15 percent discount in application fees if a project is a certified Green Building project. Green Building projects are designed to diminish environmental impact and increase earth-friendly practices with their corresponding benefits to tenants and owners.

"The agenda set at the Green Building Summit this month, which helped generate today's initiatives, will build greater strength into the Meadowlands Master Plan and our planning for the next 25 years," said NJMC Executive Director Robert Ceberio. "We are committed to improving the environmental quality of life residents enjoy in the Meadowlands in every way, and if we can better foster that ambition in our redevelopment efforts, we can build on our track record of innovation."

The NJMC will also enter into an agreement with Ramapo College of New Jersey to create a Sustainable Meadowlands Resource Institute staffed by Ramapo through a \$100,000 annual allocation. The goal of the SMRI is to increase green building redevelopment and retrofitting in the Meadowlands District through a partnership-based model with business leaders. The SMRI will help develop cost-effective green design

guidelines, host workshops on green design, and find resources – including grant applications – for developers and the public sector.

Finally, the NJMC will also move forward with analyzing the potential for establishing areas within the Meadowlands District where renewable energy infrastructure can be installed or expanded. This can include photovoltaic solar power farms on rooftops and brownfields, harnessing tidal energy, developing thermal energy, and discovering other regional approaches to green energy production. Such a program could serve as a model on how regional planning can be used to discover innovative local alternative energy sources and would support the Meadowlands Master Plan's mandate for increased synergy between the demands of built-up environments and natural areas.

These actions are in addition to a partnership with the U.S. Green Building Council to hold an intensive workshop for developers, the drafting of green building design guidelines for the Meadowlands Master Plan, and pursuing green building standards for the NJMC's existing operations and expanded campus.

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